

SARL NEWS SUNDAY 04 NOVEMBER 2007

You are listening to ZS6SRL the official Radio Station of the South African Radio League, the National Body for Amateur Radio in South Africa, with a news bulletin that is transmitted every Sunday at 08:15 CAT in Afrikaans and at 08:30 CAT in English. To listen to a web stream or Echolink by ZS6FCS visit www.sarl.org.za, click on ARMI and follow the links for details.

You can download this and previous bulletins from www.sarl.org.za and you can also subscribe there to receive future bulletins by email.

Your news reader this morning is Hans, ZS6KR, on 145,725 and 7,066 MHz from Pretoria with relays on 28,235, 14,235, 10,130, 7,066 and 3,695 MHz SSB as well as 51,400, 438,825 and 1 296 MHz FM in the Pretoria area. (Other newsreaders please change to suit).

SILENT KEY

We learnt that Servaas Harmsen, ZS6XL, became silent key some time ago. Our sincerest sympathies to his relatives and friends.

(PAUSE)

In the news today:

LAST CHANCE TO WIN AN ARRL HANDBOOK BY DECODING MESSAGE ON THE SARL BEACON

SARL TRANSCEIVER PROJECT HALTED

DETAILS OF 2008 CONSTRUCTION COMPETITION ANNOUNCED

MOTIONS FOR 2008 SARL AGM INVITED

WRC NO CONCLUSIONS FOR AMATEUR RADIO AS YET

You are listening to ZS6SRL. Stay tuned for more detail on these and other important and interesting news items.

LAST CHANCE TO WIN AN ARRL HANDBOOK BY DECODING MESSAGE ON THE SARL BEACON

Listen to the ZS6SRL beacon on 7 023 kHz, decode the morse code message and send your entry to armi@sarl.org.za and you could be the winner of a ARRL Handbook. The closing date is 6 November 2007. The CW is sent at 8 words per minute and should be easy to copy. In addition to the message also send us you address details so that should you be the winner the book can be mailed to you.

SARL TRANSCEIVER PROJECT HALTED

After careful consideration the council of the SARL in consultation with the core team has decided to terminate the SARL transceiver project. Some very

valuable paper research was done by a number of people but the ultimate analysis showed that the low cost objective could not be met given the low volume that the project would attract. The SARL would like to express its thanks to all who participated.

MIKE BRINK JOINS HANNES COETZEE AS A WINNER IN THE SA AMATEUR RADIO DEVELOPMENT TRUST CONSTRUCTION COMPETITION

The SA Amateur Radio Development Trust has awarded Mike Brink, ZS6BRI, for his entry in the 2007 Construction competition. He joins Hannes Coetzee whose entry of a 40 metre Direct Conversion Receiver was rewarded at this year's RTA in Gauteng. Both received a Yaesu 2 metre transceiver sponsored by Verstay.

Mike Brink's project is a workstation for 1,2 GHz, an interesting but complex matrix of equipment. The function of the SHF Workstation is to provide a development platform containing all the building blocks and instrumentation that one would need to develop projects in the 1,2 GHz band. It features a spectrum analyzer, frequency counter, circuit profiler, in-circuit component tester (to save you unsoldering all those bothersome SMT devices) a RF signal generator, an Audio/Data/Video function generator, band scanner and a fully featured SHF transceiver.

It works in conjunction with an oscilloscope or personal computer to generate a display.

Details of Mike's entry will soon be available on www.amateurradio.org.za

Congratulations to Mike.

DETAILS OF 2008 CONSTRUCTION COMPETITION ANNOUNCED

The South African Amateur Radio Development Trust has announced details of the 2008 construction competition. It is an open competition; you have to select your own project. It works as follows: In part one of the competition constructors are invited to put forward details of the project they would like to enter. Documentation must include a description of the project and its outcome. Also include an estimate of what it will cost to construct the project. On 1 March 2008 the Trust will select three projects and award the amount of money required to submit the final working prototype with a limit of R3 000 per project. In part two of the competition the completed projects will be evaluated and the best project will be awarded the main prize of which details will be announced soon. For more details visit www.amateurradio.org.za

MOTIONS FOR 2008 SARL AGM INVITED

Motions are invited from SARL members or affiliated clubs for next year's SARL AGM. By this time all members should be acquainted with the requirements for motions. Send your motions before 30 November to secretary@sarl.org.za.

WRC NO CONCLUSIONS FOR AMATEUR RADIO AS YET

The end of the second week of the four-week 2007 World Radio Communication Conference is drawing near, but at least as far as the amateur services are concerned the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) WRC-07 team reports there is not much in the way of firm conclusions. Here is a report prepared by IARU Secretary David Sumner, K1ZZ.

An unexpected highlight of the opening plenary was the announcement by Secretary-General Hamadoun Touré, at the end of his prepared remarks, that he had earned his amateur license. We seldom, if ever, have received such prominence during the opening ceremonies of a conference. Dr. Touré's call sign is HB9EHT. He left for the Connect Africa Summit in Kigali immediately after the conference opening but is expected to be back in Geneva next week.

Progress on the agenda items of interest to the amateur services has been slow. The 4-10 MHz issue is bogged down, with opponents of HF broadcasting expansion holding fast to a position of "no change". HF BC proponents are not nearly as numerous as in 2003 and are mainly in Europe; they have backed off from an initial position of 350 kHz of expansion down to 200 kHz, but there has not yet been any movement from the other side. In the meantime work on the other 4-10 MHz issues, including the possibility of a 5 MHz secondary amateur allocation (which so far is supported by the European BC proponents), cannot progress. Even if the HF BC allocation could be settled quickly, which seems unlikely at this point, time is running out to complete work on the rest of these issues. Meetings will continue over the weekend and well into next week.

Early this week it appeared that the issue of a 135,7-137,8 kHz secondary allocation to the amateur service had been settled favorably. However, it turned out that the concerns of some Arab administrations had not been fully satisfied and more work needed to be done. On Friday morning, 2 November the allocation was approved at the Working Group 4C level with two footnotes, one of which limits power to 1 watt e.i.r.p. and a second that allows countries in Region 1 to opt out of the allocation if they wish. Saudi Arabia repeated its opposition to the allocation and requested that this be noted in the Working Group's report to Committee 4. The allocation still has to be approved by Committee 4 and the Plenary. The next meeting of Committee 4 is scheduled for Tuesday afternoon, 6 November.

The process of identifying possible frequency bands for future international mobile telecommunications (cell phones and beyond) is very contentious. One frequency range being examined is 2,3-2,4 GHz, which of course is of concern to us although there is no immediate cause for alarm.

Prior to every WRC we look for opportunities to clean up so-called "country footnotes" that allow individual administrations to depart from the regional or international allocations that are in the body of the Table of Frequency Allocations. It is gratifying that several countries have agreed to remove themselves

from footnotes that apply to parts of 160 and 80 metres, 6 metres, and (in some European countries) parts of 70 cm.

With regard to agenda items for future WRCs, discussions will begin in earnest on Saturday, 3 November. Proposals have been offered for agenda items dealing with possible amateur allocations around 500 kHz, 5 MHz, and (in Region 1) 50 MHz; of course, 50 MHz is already allocated to the amateur service in Regions 2 and 3. There are more than 40 proposals for future agenda items, which is at least twice as many as are likely to be approved, so the fate of “our” future agenda items remain to be determined. The IARU team is following other proposed agenda items closely to determine (and minimize, to the extent we are able) their potential impact on the amateur services.

SARL HF FIELD DAY

The second leg of the SARL HF Field Day will take place on the weekend of 17 and 18 November 2007. this CW and phone contest starts at 12:00 CAT on Saturday and ends 24 hours later. Activity on 160 to 10 metres. The rules are available in the 2007 SARL Contest Manual.

PROPAGATION CONDITIONS

Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP reports that the expected solar activity will be at very low levels. The geomagnetic field is expected to be quiet in general. The expected Effective Sun Spot number for the coming week will be less than 5. Fortunately the DX conditions are warming up a bit, especially towards India and the USA.

15 m and 20 m will provide best opportunities for DX. There is a possibility of 10, 15 and 20 m openings towards India from about 08:00 CAT. There may be short, weak 20 m openings to Australia at about 06:00. From 16:00 there may be 15 and 20 m openings towards Europe. From 18:00 onwards there may be 15, 20 and 80 m openings towards the USA.

For the CW and digital enthusiasts it will also be worth monitoring 10 MHz.

Locally conditions on 40 m is going to be good during the day. 30 m may perform well over the longer distances.

It is once again time to work towards your 80 m WAZS award in the evenings, thunderstorms permitting! Remember that this is only a prediction and that HF always has the capability to surprise you. You will never know what you are missing unless you switch your rig on, listen and also call CQ.

Please visit www.spaceweather.co.za for further information.

DIARY OF EVENTS

17 to 18 November SARL HF Field day; 24 to 25 November Battle Group South exhibition at Johannesburg War Museum; 25 November Intechnet about ARDF; 30 November Closing date for nominations for SARL Councillors and motions for 2008 AGM.

SARL News invites clubs and individuals to submit news stories of interest to radio amateurs and shortwave listeners. Submit news stories if possible in both English and Afrikaans to www.sarl.org.za/newsinbox.asp not later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

The SARL also invites you to listen to the programme Amateur Radio Mirror International, on the air every Sunday morning at 10:00 CAT on 145,750 MHz in the Pretoria area with relays on 7 082, 7 205 and 17 590 kHz. For the web stream and echolink by ZS6FCS visit www.sarl.org.za, click on ARMI and follow the links. A repeat transmission can be heard Mondays at 21:00 CAT on 3 215 kHz. Sentechn sponsors the ARMI transmissions on the non-amateur frequencies.

Today's South African Radio League news bulletin was compiled by George, ZS6NE, and transmitted by (your name and call sign).

Thank you for listening. 73.

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